



National Association of Conservation Districts

July 06, 2023

The Honorable Martin Heinrich
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Agriculture, Rural Development,
Food and Drug Administration,
and Related Agencies
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable John Hoeven
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Agriculture, Rural Development,
Food and Drug Administration,
and Related Agencies
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Andy Harris,
Chairman
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Agriculture, Rural Development,
Food and Drug Administration
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Sanford Bishop, Jr.
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Agriculture, Rural Development,
Food and Drug Administration
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Heinrich, Chairman Harris, Ranking Member Hoeven, and Ranking Member Bishop:

The National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) thanks you for your commitment to supporting locally led conservation and enacting a responsible federal budget. In April, more than 50 conservation and agriculture organizations sent a letter to your committees requesting that the Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24) Agriculture, Rural Development, and Food and Drug Administration appropriations bill include increased funding for the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Conservation Operations. Conservation Operations funding is critical to the effective administration of USDA conservation programs and provides essential tools to help farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners across the country voluntarily implement effective conservation practices on their lands.

Conservation Operations provides funding for Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA), which facilitates the administration of USDA conservation programs by supporting our conservation workforce, conservation planning, and the extension of specialized technical assistance to producers. Providing strong funding for CTA is now more important than ever as NRCS and partners work to administer historic investments in voluntary conservation programs. Our country's conservation delivery system and producers across the country depend on the availability of on-the-ground technical assistance to implement effective conservation practices.

NACD appreciates Congress' obligation to pass FY24 appropriations bills that support a balanced and responsible federal budget. With rising national debt, inflation, and other economic pressures, it is critical for Congress to pass appropriations bills that put our country on a fiscally responsible path. NACD also recognizes that the recent debt ceiling agreement requires Congress to adhere to additional budgetary restrictions in FY24 spending bills. Considering these important limitations, NACD encourages your committees to support strong funding for NRCS Conservation Operations in the final FY24 spending agreement.



National Association of Conservation Districts

Thank you for your attention to our request. NACD looks forward to continuing working with you to support conservation and our nation's producers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kim LaFleur". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kim LaFleur
NACD President